Magistrate is at fault, but because the work of his assistants is defective. If at any time you find there are extreme cases of delay and bring it to notice, the Government will deal with the person at fault and thereby prevent the recurrence of such delays.

### 72. Proposed North Travancore railway.

MR. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI KRISHNA PILLAI (*Member, Municipal Council, Alwaye*) prayed that the proposed North Travancore railway line should pass through the taluks of Minachil, Todupuzha, Muvattupuzha and Kunnatnad which were neglected in the matter of communications. The line should proceed from Ettumanur *via* Kuttattukulam, Muvattupuzha and Perumbavur to Alwaye. The line suggested would not only open up the country, but be cheaper as, by taking the other line, land compensation would be heavier. The cost of construction would be lower if the alignment were moved to the east where the soil was hard. The Vembanad lake and the lower reaches of the Muvattupuzha river provided ample facilities for communication in the western region and the policy should not be to add to the already abundant conveniences in one place, but to provide the minimum requirements in places which were entirely devoid of communications. The line should pass through the middle of the country east of the lake. Muvattupuzha and the neighbouring places were fast becoming thickly populated. Hill produce could be easily transported along the route suggested.

Alwaye deserved to be a junction. It contained the highest seats of learning of the various communities and religions in the State and might be the seat of the future Kerala University. It was the emporium for the up country and possessed a salubrious climate. It was near Ernakulam and the Cochin harbour; and if and when, for administrative convenience, Kottayam Division was bifurcated, Alwaye would be the headquarters of the new northern Division.

The Member requested that all these facts be considered before the alignment was finally decided on.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Krishna Pillai, I understand that your representations are, firstly, that Muvattupuzha should be opened up and linked up with the railway system, and, secondly, that Alwaye should be made the terminus of the North Travancore extension. That it is imperative to open up Muvattupuzha and link up Muvattupuzha with the railway system, I quite agree. But that Alwaye should be made the terminus of the North Travancore line is a matter in which neither the Government nor their Railway Adviser could agree. The proposed line is to pass through Ettumanur *via* Talayolaparambu and on to Trippunittura and Ernakulam. That being the case, as Ernakulam is already connected with Alwaye by rail, it follows that this line continues with the existing system on to Alwaye. If you want to take it to Alwaye direct, it means that 22 miles more of railway line should be constructed. All the traffic that passes through and from Travancore has first to go to Alwaye, then to be brought to the Cochin harbour. The Ernakulam-Shoranur line is going to be converted into a broad-gauge line. Our line will be only a narrow gauge; and therefore, if your suggestion is adopted, the goods have to be transferred from the narrow gauge to the broad gauge at Alwaye. In view of all these considerations, it is not possible to carry this particular line to Alwaye. Muvattupuzha will probably be served later on by a feeder line.

### 73. Railway communications.

MR. E. T. C. FARR (*Member, South Travancore Planters' Association*) represented the great inconvenience and loss caused to the trading and travelling public by the breaches on the railway line near Shermadevi which occurred more or less regularly every year during the north-east monsoon. In November 1925, the line was breached and goods were held up for over three weeks with the result that heavy financial loss had to be sustained owing to inability to get the produce marketed; damage was also caused by the uncovered waggons standing in the open rain during the period. For weeks at a time, goods manufactured in the State were held up, and in certain industries, business almost came to a stand-still. The Travancore section

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of the railway had never, it was well-known, been burdened with an over-supply of waggons, and the loss that occurred through these breaches was really never made up, and, in addition, merchants in British India got tired of waiting and purchased their goods elsewhere. The construction of a few more culverts would prevent breaches ; and the expenditure would also serve to avoid the considerable loss of revenue to the State.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Farr, the longest interruption of traffic at that particular point was caused by the heavy floods recently. The other interruptions have been camparatively slight and of short duration. Every weak point is now being given attention to and a new bridge is being constructed near Shermadevi providing for a larger vent-way, and it is now expected that damage will be averted in the future.

2. With regard to the provision of further culverts, the question will be placed before my Railway Adviser and then before the Agent to the South Indian Railway. And if more culverts will still further obviate interruptions, they will be constructed.

**74. Irrigation in the Vilavankod taluk.**

MR. R. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Member, Vilavankod taluk*) said that irrigation in the Vilavankod taluk had formed the subject of representation in the Assembly during the last twenty years; an allotment was being made annually for expenditure on minor irrigation works from 1098; but the progress so far achieved would indicate that generations might have to pass before the present difficulties were removed. The late Mr. P. Thanu Pillai had in paragraph 38 of his memorandum on the Kodayar Project, acknowledged the superior claims of Vilavankod to the waters from Pechipara and the deplorable condition of the ryots of that taluk. The annual expenditure in the Vilavankod taluk on minor irrigation works amounted to Rs. 5,500 till 1073 when it was stopped on the ground of the contemplated Right Bank Channel. The tanks were neglected with the result that *kariru* was almost the rule; and the Right Bank Channel had yet to be opened. It was now stated that the water in the reservoir would not prove adequate if the Right Bank Channel were opened, and that the water-cess derived from the lands that could be brought thereby under irrigation in the Vilavankod taluk would not cover the interest on the outlay required for the work. The raising of the Pechipara dam by three feet would solve the first difficulty.

On the second point, *viz.*, restoration of tanks, the Member quoted the observations contained in the Report of the Indian Famine Commissioner who pointed out that the true value of protective irrigation works should be judged not by their financial success considered with reference to the net return to the Government on the capital invested but by the direct protection afforded by them in years of drought, by the saving of human life, by the avoidance of loss of revenue remitted and of the outlay incurred in costly measures of relief. Annually, Travancore imported paddy and rice worth nearly 2·5 crores of rupees and any expenditure to increase the local production of foodstuffs would be justified. In G. O. No. 540/L. R., dated the 13th January 1914, the Chief Engineer had been specifically asked to submit plans and estimates for working up the full lake level by three feet, thereby raising the quantity of water impounded from 3,685 to 4,500 millions of cubic feet. If this work is undertaken, 16,780 acres of wet lands in Vilavankod taluk would be benefited; and the extension of the Pattanamkal from the Left Bank Channel would benefit the western *pakuthies* of the old Eraniel taluk.

The Right Bank Channel was said to have been abandoned on the expert opinion of Mr. H. E. Clark and Major W. H. Ellis. If this is to be taken as final, the investigation of what is known as the Vannampara Scheme should be taken up at once. The matter was brought up at the seventeenth and eighteenth sessions of the Assembly. Investigation by experts should not be further delayed, as the opinion of one Chief Engineer who did not support the scheme was based merely on the report of a subordinate, as the present Chief Engineer is believed to favour the idea and

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